Wm Lassell

Starfield 13th Nov 1851

My dear Sir John

I am very much obliged by your invitation for the 15th inst. which I regret I am unable to accept from having been so much from home this summer.

I am happy to say that I obtained further observations last night of the two new satellites of Uranus which give a nearer

approximations to the
periodic times. The period
of the nearest = 2·506 days
& of the other 4·150 days.
The nearest is rather the
brightest.

I beg my kind regards
to Lady Lubbock & your
family & remain
my dear Sir John
Very truly yours
Wm Lassell

Sir J. W. Lubbock Bart. &c &c
London

DSI

b481

Bradstones, Wednesday

Dear Mrs Thompson

Pray do not think me unsocial or deficient in taste, that I do not join your party. The planets, some of them at least, have come & I am not ready for them! I have been working harder than ever since our return from

Aberdeen to perfect the figure of the Speculum & have scarce time or thoughts at the present moment for another subject.

Will you accept this as my apology in the present instance & believe me

very truly yours
Wm Lassell

To
Wm Thompson
Thingwall

DSI

DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM LASSELL, F.R.S.

A great loss to the scientific world has been sustained by the death of Mr. William Lassell, the distinguished astronomer. Mr. Lassell was born at Bolton, Lancashire, on June, 1799, and was, therefore, in the 82nd year of his age. About 1820 he began to construct reflecting telescopes for himself. With one of these instruments, a Newtonian of nine inches aperture of very great excellence, he detected independently, and without previous knowledge of its existence, the sixth star in the trapezium of Orion. This telescope was mounted equatorially on a plan devised by himself, and may be said to form an epoch in the history of the reflecting telescope. In 1844 Mr. Lassell conceived the bold idea of constructing a reflector of two feet aperture and 20 feet focal length, to be mounted on the same principle. With this instrument he discovered, September, 1847, the satellite of Neptune, and in September, 1848, simultaneously with the late Professor Bond in America, he discovered Hyperion, an eighth satellite of Saturn. In 1851, after long and careful search, he discovered two additional satellites of the planet Uranus (Umbriel and Ariel), interior to the two discovered by Sir W. Herschell in 1787. In 1852 Mr. Lassell took out this telescope to Malta, and observed there through the winter of that year. He subsequently made a still larger telescope—four feet in aperture and 37 feet focus, mounted equatorially. This grand instrument was erected in 1861 at Malta and the work done with it during the next four years, included the discovery of 600 new nebulæ. After his return from Malta Mr. Lassell purchased an estate near Maidenhead, and erected in an observatory his equatorial telescope of two feet aperture. In 1839 Mr. Lassell was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, receiving its gold medal in 1849, and in 1870 was elected its president. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1849, and received one of its gold medals in 1858. Mr. Lassell not only contributed largely to the advancement of science, but in his private character was a man whom to know was to regard with deep reverence and affection.

LASSELL (**William,** F.R.S., 1799-1880) AUTOGRAPH LETTER, signed, 2 pp. 8vo., Starfield 13th Nov. 1851, to Sir John W. Lubbock, F.R.S., £1, 5*s* Soth

An important letter, giving further information on his discovery of the two inner satellites of Uranus (Ariel and Umbriel). . . . 'I am happy to say that I obtained further observations last night of the two new Satellites of Uranus which give a nearer approximations [*sic*] to the periodic times. The period of the nearest = 2,506 days & of the other 4,150 days. The nearest is rather the brightest.' . . .

A —— A.L.S., Bradstones, Wednesday, to Mrs. Thompson, 2 pages 8vo., 17*s* 6*d*

This was probably written between 1859-60, when he constructed a reflecting telescope of 4 feet aperture, which is fully described by Miss Agnes M. Clerke, in the article Lassell, in *D.N.B.* 'I have been working harder than ever since our return from Aberdeen to perfect the figure of the Speculum & have scarce time or thoughts at the present moment for any other subject.' . . .

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LASSELL, William

A. L. S. dated Nov. 13, 1857 to Sir John Lubbock relating to observations of two new satellites

Loschmidt, Mach, J. Clerk Maxwell, Michelson, Simon Newcomb, Oppolzer (by R. Schramm), Painlevé, Dean Peac
H. Perigal, H. Poincaré (2), Pupin, Regnault (by J. B. Dumas, with author's inscr. to Tyndall), Philipp Reis, Sir Fra
Ronalds, St. Venant, Secchi, Sohnke, Sir G. G. Stokes, G. J. Stoney, Tait (2), Torricelli, Verdet, Volta, A. G. Webs
and W. H. Wollaston.

74 **MAURY (Matthew Fontaine;** *oceanographer*, 1806-73) AUTOGRAPH LETTER, signed, 2 pp. 8v
Office of Colonization, Mexico, 26 Jan. 66, to Dr. Schurzer, Vienna, £1. 1*s*

gow, Dec. 13/75, to Dr. [Prof. E. J.] Mill[s, F.R.S.], 1 page 8vo., *an invitation to dinner*, £1

5761 **KOHLRAUSCH (Friedrich Wilhelm Georg,** *prof. physics, Strasburg*, 1840-1910) A.L.S. (KOHLRAUSCH), 13.1.01, to Prof. Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., 1 page 8vo., 12*s* 6*d*

'Meine Absicht, heute winigstens den Versuch zu machen, Sú zu treffen wird durch das Wetter verhindert.'

5762 **KONINCK (Laurent Guillaume de,** M.D., *prof. chem., Liége*, 1795-1887) A.L.S.